

RECORDS AND FILES

As with any government agency there are a large number of records, files, and paperwork that must be maintained by the properties. Most of these involve overall property administration, financial management, purchasing and personnel management. With a natural resource management agency, there is an additional need for considerable land and resource management files. These are very important for the tracking and continuation of professional land management on the state's properties.

While not all inclusive, this section is designed to provide a brief overview of records, files, and other information properties should maintain. Many of the records, files and information as explained here can be done on paper or digitally through computer software. While tracts are the primary management units for timber management and other resource management activities, they are not ideally suited for recording some other activities. Property lines, wildlife projects, lakes, trails and roads are not confined by tract boundaries. Therefore it is often quite logical to document activities through another identifier than the compartment and tract.

Topographic Maps

All properties should have at least two original topographic maps for every quadrangle the property is located in. At least one of the originals should be clean and unmarked so that photocopies can be made from it. All properties should have access to digital topographic maps through their GIS system. Topographic maps can be obtained through the Property Specialist.

Aerial Photos

Properties will maintain a series of aerial photos covering all property holdings. To help with current management, the primary set of photos should be no more than 15 years old. In addition, properties will maintain all previous sets of aerial photos indefinitely to provide photographic documentation of land and habitat changes. If a property does not have any aerial photos from prior to 1960, it will endeavor to acquire at least one set of appropriate aerial photos of 1950's or earlier vintage. All properties have access to recent digital aerial photos through their GIS system.

Roads

All properties should have at least one relatively recent, original county highway map for every county the property is located in. In addition, older county highway maps will be retained

to provide valuable historical reference for old public roads.

All property service and fire/access roads that are not part of a county or INDOT highway system will receive a unique identifier from the property. Properties will maintain a record of major activities performed on the roads, identifiable to a particular road. Roadwork expenses should be included as part of the record. When the roadwork is for access to (a) timber sale(s), the expenses will be included in the expense listing on the SF 200(s).

Some property service roads receive roadwork from INDOT through a maintenance agreement. The work performed by INDOT will be documented in the appropriate road file.

Wildlife and Fish

Properties conduct many projects to benefit wildlife. To document these activities, properties will maintain a file of all wildlife activities performed on the property. The Fish and Wildlife Operational Guide provides the base for this file. The file will contain maps showing the locations of activities, and descriptions of the activities. Records and locations of past activities such as wildlife openings and waterholes will be maintained. Fish management activities will be documented according to the lakes the activities are performed on.

Lakes

Most properties have man-made lakes that require considerable activity for dam integrity and public use. Properties will maintain a file on projects on lake management. This file will include rehabilitation projects, dam inspection reports, and user facility projects (boat ramps, docks). All lake vegetation management will be documented.

Tracts

Most timber and other vegetation inventories and management are based on the tract. Properties will maintain tract files to document the resource management activities that occur on the tract. Tract files will include all tract inventories and management guides. Selected paperwork from timber sales (see **State Forest Timber Sales** section) will be maintained in the tract file. This includes current as well as previous documents. Management recommendations from the natural areas survey will be placed in the appropriate tract file. Tract files may also contain records on property lines, fish and wildlife, roads, lakes, and other items deemed appropriate. It is not necessary however if the information is available in another file.

Trails

Properties will give each trail a unique identifier. Properties will maintain files to document projects on trails. This will include maps showing trail locations.

Property Lines and Land Ownership

Records on property lines and land ownership will be based on the legal land description - section, township, and range. Activities to document include all line and evidence location work done. This should include maps and descriptions of line evidence located (monuments, markers, fencing, etc.) including evidence interior, exterior and on line. Properties will obtain records of pertinent known survey markers from county surveyor offices. Properties will provide county surveyor offices with updated survey marker location information.

Properties will maintain a file of all known survey prints, private and state, that involve state property lines. Properties will endeavor to obtain copies of prints for all private surveys adjacent to the properties. Properties will send a copy of every private survey print they obtain to the Property Specialist.

Properties will maintain a file of deeds for the state property. In addition, properties will obtain and maintain a file of deeds for adjacent private land.

Plantations and Plantings

While plantations and plantings are usually located within tracts, it is usually easiest to have a separate file during the period when these areas are managed separately from the remainder of the tracts. Once these areas stop receiving special attention and are managed with the tracts, then separate documentation should cease. The exception to this is when another goal such as research requires continued separation of recordkeeping.

Information that should be documented includes species planted, planting scheme, site preparation, cultural treatments, and weed control. Associated costs may be documented, including time worked.

Each plantation and planting will have a unique identifier that is retained until it is incorporated into the tract management.

Timber Sales

Properties will maintain a file for each timber sale indefinitely. The file will contain copies of all pertinent paperwork including the paperwork identified in the **State Forest Timber Sales** section. Where appropriate, accountable receipts will be maintained in receipt books for

audit purposes. Photocopies of receipts can be used in the timber sale files.

Cultural Resources

The Forest Archeologist will maintain an inventory of cultural resources on the properties.

Natural Areas

Properties will maintain a file for each nature preserve. The file will include a map, the articles of dedication, and the master plan. It will also contain a record of management activities, if pertinent.

Old forest areas will be documented in the appropriate tract files since they are located in whole tracts.

Management recommendations and identification of special areas resulting from natural areas surveys that do not involve a nature preserve designation will be incorporated into the appropriate tract files. The recommendations will be addressed in the next management guide, or in an amendment to the existing guide.

Major Streams and Rivers

Properties with major permanent streams and rivers will maintain a file on the watercourses.

Permits, Easements, Agreements, and Letters of Permission

Properties will maintain a file all permits, easements, agreements, and letters of permission that grant some access or other right to another entity or person to enter and use state property for some specific purpose. Most commonly these are utilities, but can also include travel access.

Section Bullet Summary

- Properties will maintain files that include topographic maps, aerial photos, tract information, road information, fish and wildlife information, lakes, trails, property lines, deeds, timber sales, permits, and others.